

1996
Executive Research Project

**STRATEGY: A PERSONAL
CONSTRUCT**

Lieutenant Colonel
Michael E. Williams
U.S. Marine Corps

Faculty Research Advisor
Mr. James E. Toth



REPORT NUMBER: AF/ICAF/DP/96/001

The Industrial College of the Armed Forces
National Defense University
Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. 20319-5062

19961001 010

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A
Approved for public release;
Distribution Unlimited

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION. UNCLASSIFIED		1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS										
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY N/A		3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Distribution Statement A: Approved for Public Release: distribution is unlimited.										
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE N/A		5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)										
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) NDU-ICAF-96-		N/A										
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION Industrial College of the Armed Forces	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable) ICAF-FA	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION National Defense University										
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Fort McNair Washington, D.C. 20319-6000		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) NDU-LD-SCH Ft. McNair Washington, D.C. 20319-6000										
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION N/A	8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER N/A										
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS <table border="1"><tr><td>PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.</td><td>PROJECT NO.</td><td>TASK NO.</td><td>WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.</td></tr></table>		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.	TASK NO.	WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.					
PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.	TASK NO.	WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.									
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) <i>Strategy: A Personal Construct</i>												
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) <i>LTC Michael E. Williams, USMC</i>												
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Research	13b. TIME COVERED FROM Aug 95 TO Apr 96	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) April 1996	15. PAGE COUNT <i>24</i>									
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION												
17. COSATI CODES <table border="1"><tr><th>FIELD</th><th>GROUP</th><th>SUB-GROUP</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP							18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)	
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP										
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) See Attached												
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS		21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED										
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL Susan Lemke		22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (202) 685-3957	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL NDU-LD-SCH									

DISCLAIMER

This research report represents the views of the author and does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, the National Defense University, or the Department of Defense.

This document is the property of the United States Government and is not to be reproduced in whole or in part for distribution outside the federal executive branch without permission of the Director of Research and Publications, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, 408 4th Avenue, Fort McNair, D.C. 20319-5062.

STRATEGY: A PERSONAL CONSTRUCT

ABSTRACT

“Strategy is the art of getting one’s way.” Getting one’s way means being able to define—and attain—a desired outcome. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to *create advantage* from extant circumstances. Physics and Eastern mysticism suggest a context within which to visualize and create such advantage in order to achieve a desired outcome.

I begin this paper by relating the physics context of *force* (and its constituents, *mass* and *motion*) and *leverage* to strategy. I then shift to the Eastern mystical philosophies of Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism. Grounded on the idea that movement, flow and change are the unifying states of the universe, I suggest an application of the *yin* and *yang* synergism to strategy. Finally, using the historical examples of Hideyoshi (unified Japan in the late 16th Century), Mohandas Gandhi and Mao Tse-Tung, I synthesize physics and Eastern mysticism into a personal construct of strategy.

I. INTRODUCTION

The formal definitions of strategy with which I am familiar usually limit their application to war or war-like endeavors. Webster's defines strategy as "The science or art of military command as applied to the overall planning and conduct of large-scale combat. . . . A plan of action resulting from the proactive of strategy. . . . The art or skill of using stratagems esp. in politics and business." (Stratagem: "A military maneuver intended to surprise or deceive an enemy. . . . A deception.")¹ Clausewitz defined strategy in terms of its relation to war: "The theory of warfare tries to discover how we may gain a preponderance of physical forces and material advantages at the decisive point"² and "[Strategy] . . . means the combination of individual engagements to attain the goal of the campaign or war."³ Jomini describes strategy as ". . . the art of making war upon the map. . ."⁴ and has, as its fundamental principle, the following maxims: "To throw, by strategic movements, the mass of an army. . . upon the decisive points of a theater of war. . . to maneuver to engage fractions of the hostile army with the bulk of one's forces. . . to throw the mass of the forces upon the decisive point. . . ."⁵ Liddell Hart says strategy is ". . . the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy."⁶

I accepted a challenge to expand my conception of strategy using the historical examples of Hideyoshi (unified Japan in the late 16th Century), Mohandas Gandhi and Mao Tse-Tung. I used as my foundation the corollary I learned at ICAF: "strategy is the art of getting one's way."⁷ After many hours of study and contemplation, I concluded that these strategists recognized and extracted advantage from their circumstances in ways somewhat different from what the West generally practices. Recognizing their common

Eastern origin, I then delved into Eastern mystical philosophies: Hinduism, Zen Buddhism and the Tao. In a parallel research effort for a course in Strategic Philosophy, I developed a relationship between physics and strategy. From these two seemingly diverse topics I distilled some ideas with which I will develop a personal construct of strategy.

Thesis

“Strategy is the art of getting one’s way.” Getting one’s way means being able to define—and attain—a desired outcome. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to *create advantage* from extant circumstances. Physics and Eastern mysticism suggest a context within which to visualize and create such advantage in order to achieve a desired outcome.

II. STRATEGY: PHYSICS CONTEXT

A. Physics

Many terms used in strategy have their roots in physics. Force, power, center-of-gravity, mass, friction and leverage are all physics terms and concepts used freely within the context of strategy. Begging the readership’s indulgence, I will review Newton’s Second Law of Motion to lay a conceptual foundation for how I will define the *creation of advantage*. First, some definitions:

Mass. Mass is “the measure of a body’s resistance to acceleration [quantity of inertia or resistance to change]; the mass of a body is different from but proportional to its weight, is independent of the body’s position but dependent on its motion with respect to other bodies. . . .”⁸ Applied to strategy, the definition of mass also includes “A unified body. . . without specific shape.”⁹ Mass is both the

generator and the object of the strategy. This mass can be a country, a government, a military organization, an institution, an idea, anything that can act or be acted upon.

Velocity. Velocity is rate of movement of an object in a particular direction (vector).

Acceleration. Acceleration is the rate of change of velocity.

Force. Force is a “vector quantity that tends to produce an acceleration of a body [mass] in the direction of application. . .”¹⁰ Force is the quantification of the tools of strategy and includes (but is not limited to) military, economic, moral and psychological force.

Center of Mass. “Real bodies behave as if all of their mass were concentrated at some point. The point at which this seeming concentration is found is the center of mass.”¹¹

Center of Gravity. The point of an object (mass, idea, philosophy, concept, etc.) at which it balances. (For their use in strategy, center of mass and center of gravity are generally synonymous and interchangeable. I will consider the definition of center of gravity to include center of mass.)

Friction. Friction is “the force tangential to the common boundary of two bodies in contact that resists the motion or tendency to motion of one relative to the other.”¹²

Newton’s Second Law of Motion describes the interrelation of *force*, *mass* and *acceleration*. “The acceleration produced by a particular force acting on a body is directly proportional to the magnitude of the force and inversely proportional to the mass of the body [Force = Mass x Acceleration].”¹³ **Force generates (or stops) motion.**

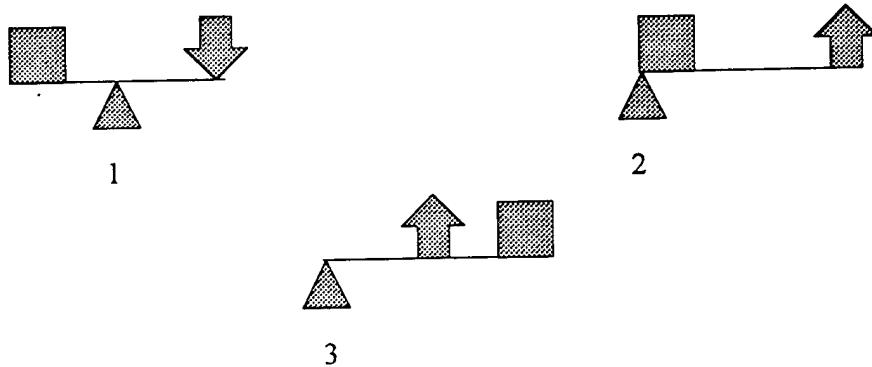
“Getting one’s way” implies *motion*, either in the physical or the abstract sense. This implication of motion can either be positive (displacement) or negative (preventing displacement). For example, our strategy in World War II was to force the unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan. Given the characteristics of the two governments, this necessitated displacing them. Accomplishing this required generating enough mass to provide the force necessary to overcome the opposition’s mass/force proportion, creating, abstractly, motion. On another level, using the predator/prey relationship, the predator employs its instinctive hunting strategy to displace its prey into the predator’s stomach. If the predator successfully “gets its way,” this displacement will satisfy its hunger.

Clausewitz gives us the term “*center of gravity*:” “. . . the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the point against which all our energies should be directed.”¹⁴ He stresses the need to identify an opponent’s center of gravity “. . . and if possible trace them back to a single one. . .” and to concentrate force on that point.¹⁵ Force applied to a center of gravity generates the desired movement, or displacement. This displacement can be concrete, as in force of arms used to displace a

government, or an abstraction, as when an opposing government changes its policy in response to a change in its estimate of possibilities and consequences (e.g. the establishment of an opposing alliance; a change in correlation of forces).

Creating Advantage. Leverage creates advantage. Again, I beg your indulgence with another physics review--the *lever-fulcrum* system. A *lever* is a simple machine, used to magnify force, that consists of any rigid object capable of turning about some fixed point called the *fulcrum*. There are three types of levers, as depicted below.

The first type of lever has the fulcrum between the object acted upon and the force (#1). The second has the object acted upon between the fulcrum and the force (#2). The third type has the force applied between the fulcrum and the object acted upon (#3).



Three possible arrangements and effects can be produced with a lever, depending on the position of the fulcrum relative to the points where the load and effort are applied. In the first case (#1, above), if the force exerted and the load lifted are just sufficient to keep the lever in balance, then the *force-amplifying* capacity, or *mechanical advantage*, of the lever is equal to the ratio of the load lifted to the force exerted. In this case, the

mechanical advantage is one, because the weight and force are equal. If the fulcrum was moved to a location three times the distance from the force exerted as from the load lifted, the amount of force required to lift the load would be one-third of that required when the fulcrum was equidistant, or, the same amount of force could lift three times as much load. A mechanical example of this would be the gripping power of a pair of pliers or the load-lifting effectiveness of a pry bar.

In example #2 (above), the mechanical advantage is the ratio of the length of the bar to the distance of the load to the fulcrum. Examples of this type of lever include the nutcracker and the wheelbarrow. In the wheelbarrow, the fulcrum is on the axis of the wheel, the weight is at the center of gravity of the load being lifted, and the force is the effort exerted on the handles by the operator.

In the third example (#3, above), the lever does not multiply force, as it does in the previous two examples. Rather, it multiplies motion. A practical example is a foot-operated sewing machine. A relatively large force applied by the foot of the operator through a small distance on the pedal results in a lesser force moving the sewing machine wheel through a large angular distance. In all levers, what is gained in motion is lost in force, so that the larger force always moves through the smaller distance.¹⁶

B. Application

Translating physics into strategy is a subjective abstraction. The actors are represented by the term *mass*. Mass is both the wielder and the object of force. The desired end state is to “get one’s way.” This implies motion or displacement (positive or negative). Force generates motion in accordance with the relationship Force (F) = Mass (M) x Acceleration

(A). I define this relationship as *mass-effect*. Mass-effect is the amount of displacement that a particular combination or proportion of force, mass and acceleration can achieve. An increase or decrease in any or all of the constituents will result in a corresponding increase or decrease in the mass-effect (unless there is a proportional increase **and** decrease among the components that results in either a net change or no change). Leverage creates advantage; it magnifies force, thereby, proportionally increasing mass-effect.

Transposing this into a practical example, Great Britain's mass-effect just before the United States entered World War II consisted of Great Britain and her allies, and the military force (with its economic and industrial support) they were able to generate against the Axis. Great Britain's mass-effect increased decisively when America entered World War II. *Mass* increased with an additional ally, therefore increasing the amount of *force* that could be brought to bear. The total of this mass and force relationship, mass-effect, became greater than Germany's mass-effect.

In order to achieve the Allies' desired end-state—the unconditional surrender of Germany—it was necessary to displace mass onto the European continent. To accomplish this, the Allies *leveraged* their strategic mobility (which included air power) by targeting the transportation infrastructure (a center of gravity) supporting the intended lodgment site. With Germany's strategic mobility thus restricted, the Allies successfully displaced onto the European continent and eventually achieved their desired end-state, Germany's surrender.

In another example, the predator can increase his mass-effect by increasing his mass (size) or his speed (acceleration) to generate greater force, therefore having a greater impact on its prey (which could translate into a quicker or surer kill). He can also increase his mass-effect (thereby creating advantage) by banding together with other predators (wolf packs, lion prides, etc.). This increases the odds of a successful hunt and/or increases the size of the success.

The concept of *leverage* and using it to magnify mass-effect is important. It can be used to increase mass-effect without increasing *each* component in the $F = M \times A$ equation. This is particularly important if the strategist must “get his way” while experiencing a decrease in the magnitude of one or more of the components that constitute mass-effect. (As an aside, I don’t mean to imply that what I outlined above always occurs in a pure, linear fashion as predicted by the equation $F = M \times A$. In all **real** life, as in all **real** physics, *friction* diminishes and confuses the results and must be allowed or, at least, be accounted for.)

III. STRATEGY: EASTERN MYSTICAL CONTEXT

A. Eastern Mysticism

“Strategy is the art of getting one’s way.” So far, I have cast this in the context of physics. I used *force*, *mass* and *acceleration* and their combination--*mass-effect*--with the connotation of *imposition*. The strategist manages mass-effect to *impose* a desired end state--to get his way. There is, however, another option, suggested by Eastern mysticism.

Eastern mysticism includes Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism. The essence of these philosophies is movement, flow and change, the unifying state of the universe. "Their main aim is the direct mystical experience of reality. . . ."¹⁷

The central aim of Eastern Mysticism is to experience all phenomena in the world as manifestations of the same ultimate reality. This reality is seen as the essence of the universe, underlying and unifying the multitude of things and events we observe. The Hindus call it Brahman, the Buddhists *Dharmakaya* (the Body of Being), or *Tathata* (Suchness), and the Taoists *Tao*; each affirming that it transcends our intellectual concepts and defies further description. This ultimate essence, however, cannot be separated from its multiple manifestations. It is central to its very nature to manifest itself in myriad forms which come into being and disintegrate, transforming themselves into one another without end. In its phenomenal aspect, the cosmic One is thus intrinsically dynamic, and the apprehension of its dynamic nature is basic to all schools of Eastern Mysticism. Thus D.T. Suzuki writes about the Kegon school of Mahayana Buddhism, "The central idea of Kegon is to grasp the universe dynamically whose characteristic is always to move onward, to be forever in the mood of moving, which is life."¹⁸

Hinduism is a complex, many-faceted "socio-religious" entity. The aspect of Hinduism applicable to this discussion is the search for enlightenment. The culmination of this search is the realization that we are not separated from our environment and are not able to act independently. Being enlightened is ". . . to realize the unity and harmony of all nature, including ourselves, and to act accordingly."¹⁹

The essential doctrine of Buddhism is based on the "Four Noble Truths." Of these four Truths, the first two apply. The first Truth establishes the salient characteristics of the human condition as being frustration and suffering. Frustration arises from the failure to realize that ". . . flow and change are basic features of nature. . . ."²⁰ Suffering arises whenever we resist this flow and change. The second Truth describes the frustration that results from dividing ". . . the perceived world into individual and separate things and thus attempt to confine the fluid forms of reality in fixed categories created by the mind."²¹

Therefore, an “. . . enlightened being is one who does not resist the flow of life, but keeps moving with it.”²²

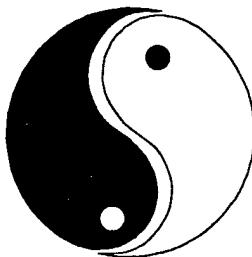
Finally, “In Chinese philosophy, the flowing and ever-changing reality is called the *Tao* and is seen as a cosmic process in which all things are involved. Like the Buddhists, the Taoists say that one should not resist the flow, but should adapt one’s actions to it.”²³ The essence of the philosophy of “going with the natural flow” is to harmonize with it.

The Eastern mystical concept of balance in the universe is articulated in the *Tao* (“the Way”). The *Tao* is “. . . the way, or process of the universe, the order of nature.”²⁴ It is “. . . the ultimate, undefinable reality. . . the cosmic process in which all things are involved; the world is seen as a continuous flow and change.”²⁵ This flow and change “. . . is not seen as occurring as a consequence of some force, but rather as a tendency which is innate in all things and situations. . . occur[ing] naturally and spontaneously.”²⁶ The *Tao* “. . . is the *balanced* (emphasis added) unification of heaven and earth within humanity.”²⁷ The equilibrium thus formed is based on the “. . . interaction of *yin* and *yang* [italics added], the two modes of the universe, of which all manner of rest and movement . . . are viewed as reflections.”²⁸

Yin and *yang* are polar opposites. *Yin*--earth--is dark, yielding and below. *Yang*--heaven--is bright, firm and above. *Yin* represents rest; *yang* represents motion. “In the realm of thought, *yin* is the complex, female, intuitive mind, *yang* the clear and rational male intellect. *Yin* is the quiet, contemplative stillness of the sage, *yang* the strong, creative action of the king.”²⁹ Pure *yin* represents receptivity, submission and flexibility.³⁰ Pure *yang* represents strength and firmness.³¹ Taken together they form a dynamic

equilibrium illustrated by the Chinese symbol *T'ai-chi T'u* (Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate).³²

This diagram is a symmetric arrangement of the dark yin and the bright yang, but the symmetry is not static. It is a rotational symmetry suggesting, very forcefully, a continuous cyclic movement: The yang returns cyclically to its beginning, the yin attains its maximum and gives place to the yang (Capra, p. 107).



This illustration shows the two components, yin and yang, as opposite but balanced and equal. They form a synergistic whole. So can it be with strategy.

B. Application

In order to apply Eastern mysticism to strategy—as a means of creating advantage—it is necessary to accept the basic tenants described above. First, movement and flow are the unifying state of the universe; accept this flow and change and accept that we are a part of it. Then, do not resist this flow of life; move with it. Finally, this flow and change can be managed to create advantage.

“Strategy is the art of getting one’s way.” There are two basic ways of doing this. The first is by *imposition*, as illustrated by the physics model in section II. The strategist

imposes his will to get his way. This course is represented in the *T'ai-chi T'u* by *yang* (male: strength, firmness, positive motion) There is another way. That way is through *inducement*. This course is represented by *yin* (female: receptivity, flexibility, submission).

Yin-based strategy—inducement--achieves a desired end-state either by persuasion (active or passive) or by using an opponent's *mass-effect* against him. Persuasion can range from enticement (seduction), rational argument, personal example, appealing to a higher moral sense, to "making an offer that cannot be refused." Persuasion was the strategy used by Mohandas Gandhi that I will discuss later.

Using an opponent's mass-effect against him is the foundation of Taoist-based martial arts. "A related topic. . .is that of turning the opponent's own offensive charge against him. . .winning by weakness—that is, apparently yielding to the opponent's superior strength—can be turned into a technique of evasion that allows the opponent to tumble to the ground, propelled by his own momentum and assisted by a helping push from behind as he plunges, thus his very strength defeats itself."³³ This is the basis of *jujitsu*—a weaponless defense using throws, holds and blows that derives added power from an attacker's own strength. Ancient man—cast as a predator—did not always have the strength, either individually or in numbers—to kill his prey. He often relied on inducement, either to trap and immobilize his prey, or to lure it to its death. An example would be his driving (or enticing) buffalo over a cliff, letting their mass-effect (in this case, augmented by gravity) finish the job.

Once it is established that *yin*-based strategy is valid, it is but a small step to establish the efficacy of strategy that uses both *yin* and *yang* as a synergistic whole (see

T'ai-chi T'u diagram, above) in dynamic equilibrium. This combination will be further developed using historical examples in the synthesis to follow.

IV. SYNTHESIS

A. Historic Examples: Hideyoshi, Gandhi, Mao

Hideyoshi. “*What If The Bird Will Not Sing? Oda Nobunaga: Kill it. Toyotomi Hideyoshi: Make It Want to Sing.*” Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598) was “. . . a general who had unified Japan after a century of civil war, a governor who had laid the foundation for almost three hundred years of peacetime rule. . . . Hideyoshi was the most remarkable man in premodern Japanese history.”³⁴ The son of a farmer and part time soldier, Hideyoshi started his military service as a page in the army of a provincial lord. He switched his allegiance to another lord, Oda Nobunaga, rising in the ranks to become one of Nobunaga’s chief deputies. Hideyoshi assumed Nobunaga’s position after the latter’s murder in 1582. By the end of 1590 he pacified all of Japan. This pacification “. . . depended upon Hideyoshi’s martial genius and was achieved through a spectacular series of conquests.”³⁵ He was strong willed, patient, inspired and inspiring. None of his campaigns lasted more than six months and he completed his conquest in eight years.

There were many elements in Hideyoshi’s successes that could not be explained solely by his skill as a warrior. “To concentrate upon Hideyoshi’s brilliance in war and to put conquest at the center of his achievement is to miss a second Hideyoshi, one who owed less to fate for his surprising ascent than his skill in conciliation.”³⁶ Hideyoshi’s

“. . . letters, the terms of truce and surrender he reached with his adversaries, and the catalogue of battles he never had to fight suggest that behind the story of military victory is a more important story of negotiation and alliance.”³⁷ He sought peaceful alliances with the adversaries of his predecessor, thus preempting conflict. His “. . . generous treatment of defeated houses inclined once obdurate opponents to arbitration.”³⁸

“Conciliation not only narrowed the field of Hideyoshi’s campaigns, it provided him, too, with. . . sizable armies. . . . Thus if he emerged after Nobunaga’s death as a peerless general, it was his talent for diplomacy that made his wars manageable and his military contingents unequaled.”³⁹ Hideyoshi extended his power by enfranchising his former opponents. His predecessor expanded through conquest and obliterated those he defeated (this was standard practice). Hideyoshi enfeoffed his adversaries, thereby, at least, neutralizing their opposition and, at best, securing their cooperation. He kept the command structures of his former adversaries’ armies intact. He allowed them to maintain control, thus mitigating discontent, enabling loyal incorporation in his own army. This leniency “. . . undercut resistance among still-hostile daimyos, who found reason in this demonstration of conciliation to submit without bloodshed.”⁴⁰ Hideyoshi recognized the utility of allowing those he subdued to continue to rule their territory, thus insuring stability.

Hideyoshi’s predecessor, Oda Nobunaga, ruled by fear. Hideyoshi contrasted sharply with Nobunaga’s methods. This may account, in part, for the success of his conciliatory approach. Hideyoshi was militarily brilliant and ruthless. The alternatives he offered were extreme: cooperation and riches; contest his will and death would result.

“Hideyoshi played the benevolent and forgiving patron. It was a role he played throughout his life with mounting ostentation, and it was designed to win adulation.”⁴¹

Finally, Hideyoshi was personally unselfish. “Through apprehension, gratitude, and esteem for his fellow daimyos, he had confirmed . . . fiefs and neglected to concentrate land into his coalition. He had been willing, as well, to absorb the defeated into his coalition. Neither ruthless in victory nor arrogant in alliance, neither dependent upon outsiders nor greedy for land control, he offered promise of that departure from . . . [previous] pattern[s] which might make political cohesion possible.”⁴²

Hideyoshi epitomized the balanced approach prescribed by the *Tao*. He used both *yang*--brutal force--to impose his will and *yin*--inducement--to get his way. The synergism of this combination gave him the *leverage*--created advantage--that allowed him to achieve what eluded his *yang*-oriented predecessors. He was a very capable warrior and was ruthless when he had to be. However, his *conciliatory* approach minimized the need for combat. (It seems as though he borrowed from Sun Tzu in this regard: “For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.”⁴³) He was successful because he was a fine general. He retained what he won because he was a refined statesman. He fully utilized both halves of the *T'ai-chi T'u*.

Gandhi. Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948) used the *yin* half of the *T'ai-chi T'u*--inducement. Gandhi, a British-educated lawyer, became the champion of subjected people (in South Africa as well as India). Eschewing violence, he advocated passive resistance to achieve his aims. “In India, after 1919, he led a movement for self-government, for

economic and spiritual independence from Great Britain, and for greater tolerance within India itself between Hindus and Muslims, and between upper-caste Hindus and the depressed outcastes and untouchables. The weapons he favored were those of the spirit only; he preached nonviolence, passive resistance, civil disobedience, and the boycott.”⁴⁴

Gandhi advocated a strategy of *induced* change rather than of *imposed* change. He saw *strength*--the ability to *induce* change--as proceeding not “. . . from physical capacity. . . [but] from an indomitable will.”⁴⁵

The use of non-violence and passive resistance as strategic means is based on the strength that grows out of “indomitable will.” “Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting of one’s whole soul against the will of the tyrant. . . I am not pleading for India to practice non-violence because it is weak. I want her to practice non-violence being conscious of her strength and power.”⁴⁶

Gandhi provides us with a narrative to illustrate his concept of the practical utility of non-violence. He uses as an example a case where an armed robber repeatedly steals from a person’s house.

You set this armed robber down as an ignorant brother; you intend to reason with him at a suitable opportunity: you argue that he is, after all, a fellow man; you do not know what prompted him to steal. You, therefore, decide that, when you can, you will destroy the man’s *motive* [emphasis added] for stealing. Whilst you are thus reasoning with yourself, the man comes again to steal. Instead of being angry with him, you take pity on him. Henceforth, you, therefore, keep your doors and windows open, you change your sleeping-place, and you keep your things in a manner most accessible to him. The robber comes again and is confused as all of this is new to him; nevertheless, he takes away your things. But his mind is agitated. He enquires [sic] about you in the village, he comes to learn about your broad and loving heart, he repents, he begs your pardon, returns you your things, and leaves off the stealing habit. He becomes your servant, and you find for him honourable employment.⁴⁷

While the above example is very idealistic, Gandhi was grounded in practicality. He recognized the sacrifice that could be required on this path of non-violence and passive resistance. He states “Passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering; it is the reverse of resistance by arms.”⁴⁸ He illustrates this caveat with the following example:

He is the true soldier who knows how to die and stand his ground in the midst of a hail of bullets. Such a one was Ambarish who stood his ground without lifting a finger, though Durvasa did his worst. The Moors, who were being powdered by the French gunners, rushed into the gun’s mouth with ‘Allah’ on their lips, showed much the same type of courage. Only theirs was the courage of desperation. Ambarish’s was due to love. Yet the Moorish valour, readiness to die, conquered the gunners. They frantically waved their hats, ceased firing and greeted their erstwhile enemies as comrades.⁴⁹

Gandhi based his strategy to displace Great Britain from India on non-violence and passive resistance. “Gandhi’s challenge to . . . British rule would come from the peasantry. . . This meant the challenge would have to be non-violent since, according to Gandhi, the Indian peasantry had never been violent. Complete non-co-operation would lead to the collapse of any government.”⁵⁰

The preceding was not an absolute model of success. Obviously, Britain’s departure from India did not occur so simply or quickly. Gandhi’s effort to abrogate Britain’s control of India was not totally non-violent, nor did his efforts to reconcile Hindu and Muslim bring the results he so fervently wished (as evidenced by the partition of predominantly Hindu India and predominantly Muslim Pakistan). Gandhi’s personal impact was not as decisive as might be deduced from the examples, although he is referred to as the “Father of the Nation.”

Examples of (disproportionately) *yin*-based strategies continue to be espoused.

Gene Sharp, in his book Civilian Based Defense exemplifies this:

The aim of deterrence is to convince an attacker not to attack because of the consequences. Dissuasion is the key. Civilian based defense relies on social, political, economic and psychological weapons based on the concept of “political jujitsu;” this process throws the opponent off balance politically because their violent thrusts are met with neither violent resistance nor with surrender. Brutality against a nonviolent group is more difficult to justify (to the opponent’s own people or to the world at large) than brutality against violent rebels [assuming they share the same value system]. The opponent’s repression, when confronted with the discipline, solidarity and persistence of the nonviolent challengers, puts the opponents in the worst possible light. The effect of national and international public opinion varies widely, and cannot be relied upon to effect major change. Finally, even the opponent’s own supporters, agents and troops may become disturbed by the brutalities committed against nonviolent people and may begin to doubt the justice of their government’s policies as well as the morality of the oppression.⁵¹

In my opinion, the approach described above is valid only if both parties share the same value system. I included this approach to illustrate an **unbalanced** *yin*-based strategy.

Mao Tse-Tung. Mao Tse-Tung (1893-1976), needs little formal introduction. A former teacher, librarian, union organizer and newspaper editor, he was one of the founders of the Communist Party in China. He rose to prominence as one of the leaders of the Red Army in its protracted (roughly 1927-1949), but successful, effort to wrest control of China from the Kuomintang (“National People’s, or Nationalist party”⁵²), under Chiang Kai-shek. Mao depended heavily on *inducing* (seducing?) popular support to feed his revolution. He employed a *Taoist* balance of *yin* and *yang* to achieve his strategic aim.

B. Strategy: A Personal Construct

The following points constitute my construct of strategy:

- “Strategy is the art of getting one’s way” (achieving a desired end-state).
- To insure success, the strategist should seek to identify and *create advantage* from the circumstances confronting him.
- *Mass-effect* is an abstraction that synthesizes the physics and strategy context of *mass, force and motion (displacement)*.
- *Motion* is another abstraction that occurs when achieving a desired outcome or end-state.
- *Leverage* creates advantage by amplifying *mass-effect* (some or all of its components).
- Eastern mysticism holds *movement, flow and change (motion)* to be the unifying state of the universe. The enlightened one does not resist this flow, but moves, or harmonizes, with it.
- The *Tao* represents balanced harmony by the interrelationship of the polar opposites *yin* and *yang*, as illustrated by the *T'ai-chi T'u*.
- *Yin* and *yang* are opposites, but when harmonized present a synergistic whole.
- There are, basically two ways of achieving a desired end-state—*imposition (yang)* and/or *inducement (yin)*.

The strategist, therefore, must be able to recognize advantage that contributes to achieving the desired end-state. Advantage can be created by leverage, something that can increase any or all of the components of the strategist's mass-effect. Advantage can also be created by correctly identifying the components of the opponent's mass-effect, determining the center-of-mass (center-of-gravity), and applying leverage to that point (a round-about way of saying attacking weakness). Advantage can be created by using an opponent's mass-effect (momentum, strength) against him. Finally, advantage can be created (and a desired end-state achieved) by imposition, inducement, or a balance of both.

-
- ¹ Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary (Boston, MA, 1984), p. 1145.
- ² "The Most Important Principles for the Conduct of War," translated and edited by Hans W. Gatzke, in Roots of Strategy, Book 2, Stackpole Books (Harrisburg, PA, 1987), p. 316.
- ³ Ibid., p. 349.
- ⁴ "The Art of War," ed. By BGEN J.D. Hittle USMC (Ret), in Roots of Strategy, Book 2, Stackpole Books (Harrisburg, PA 1987), p. 460.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 461.
- ⁶ Strategy, 2nd Revised Edition (Meridian, 1991), p. 321.
- ⁷ COL Jim Toth, USMC (Ret.), ICAF.
- ⁸ Webster's, p. 730.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 496.
- ¹¹ Asimov, p. 76.
- ¹² Websters, p. 510.
- ¹³ Ibid., p. 30.
- ¹⁴ Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, 1976), p. 595.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., p. 619.
- ¹⁶ Alexander Cowie, "Lever," The Academic American Encyclopedia (Electronic Version), (Grolier, Inc., Danbury CT, 1995).
- ¹⁷ Isaac Asimov, Understanding Physics, (Dorset Press, 1988), p. 85
- ¹⁸ Fritjof Capra, The Tao of Physics, 3rd ed. (Boston, 1991), p. 189
- ¹⁹ Ibid., p. 88.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 95.
- ²¹ Ibid., p. 95.
- ²² Ibid., p. 191.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Ibid., p. 104.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Ibid., p. 116.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ The Taoist I Ching, trans. Thomas Cleary (Boston & London, 1986), p. 10.
- ²⁹ Capra, p. 106.
- ³⁰ I Ching, p. 31.
- ³¹ I Ching, p. 26.
- ³² Capra, p. 107.
- ³³ Winston L. King, Zen and the Way of the Sword, (Oxford, 1993), p. 233.
- ³⁴ Mary Elizabeth Berry, Hideyoshi, (Cambridge, Mass., 1982), p. 1.
- ³⁵ Ibid., p. 66.
- ³⁶ Ibid., p. 67.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 69.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., p. 87.
- ⁴² Ibid., p. 98.
- ⁴³ Sun Tzu, The Art Of War, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (Oxford, 1971), p. 77.
- ⁴⁴ R.R. Palmer and Joel Colton, A History of the Modern World, 8th ed. (New York, 1995), p. 793.
- ⁴⁵ The Penguin Gandhi Reader, ed. Rudrangshu Mukherjee (India, 1993), p.99.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., p 100.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 44.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 48.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 96.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. xiv.

⁵¹ Gene Sharp, Civilian Based Defense, (Princeton, 1990) (summary).

⁵² R.R. Palmer and Joel Colton, A History of the Modern World, 8th ed. (New York, 1995), p.794.